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MANPOWER AND EMPLOYMENT PLANNING INSTITUTIONS, THEIR STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS AND POLICIES IN LIBERIA

(An overview)

MANPOWER AND EMPLOYMENT PLANNING INSTITUTIONS, THEIR STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS AND POLICIES IN LIBERIA[1/]

I. Introduction

1. This paper attempts to analyse the status and effectiveness of existing manpower and employment planning machineries, their staffing arrangements and human resources policies in Liberia. The analysis shows that though many laudable efforts have been made by the Liberian Government over the years, the human resources management system in Liberia continues to suffer from (i) weak, ineffective and disintegrated national and sectoral manpower units and departments at the operational level; (ii) an acute shortage of qualified and trained manpower and employment planners within the economy; and (iii) the absence of a set of clear, comprehensive and appropriate manpower development and utilization policies and strategies for national development.

2. The combined consequences of these inadequacies have not only resulted in a poor and inadequate data base for estimating present and future manpower supply and demand within over-all national planning, but have also intensified the dychotomy of the shortage of critical manpower on the one hand and the mis-match and underutilization of the few available critical skills on the other. The need for prompt action to reverse this undesirable situation is ever more pressing particularly given Government's plans to diversify, modernize and expand the economy within a framework of a Liberianized work force. A logical starting point is to evaluate what exist, with the aim of instituting appropriate measures and tactics that would strengthen institutional and staffing capabilities for data collection, processing and analysis as well as for policy formulation and policy implementation.

3. The issues raised in this paper therefore should be regarded as a contribution towards this starting point. As such, they are intended to provide a broad background to the various topics and exercises that will be dealt within the Manpower and Employment Planning Staff Development Workshop.

II. Status of Manpower and Employment Planning Institutions in Liberia

(1) Earlier Attempts at Human Resources Management

4. In 1966 a Manpower Commission (MPC) was created by legislation as a subsidary body of the National Planning Council. The Commission was expected to:

- recommend methods of recruitment in order to ensure an adequate supply of labour;

[1/] This paper benefits from a study commissioned by the UNECA on the Status and Effectiveness of Existing National Manpower and Employment Policies, Administrative Machineries and Staffing Arrangements in Liberia undertaken by Mr. David P.G. Kialain in November 1984.

- recommend incentive measures which would motivate Liberians to pursue careers in the needed but shortage occupations;
- formulate educational targets together with a feasible programme for the improvement and expansion of education and training;
- identify training needs for the semi-skilled and skilled workers;
- recommend a scholarship programme that is required to foster high-level manpower; and
- implement the manpower plan.

5. The Manpower Commission was composed of representatives from:

- The Ministry of Finance
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The Ministry of Labour and Youth
- The University of Liberia
- The Civil Service Commission
- Labour and Management Organizations
- The Ministry of Education (Chairman)
- The Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (Secretariat)
- The Ministry of Agriculture
- The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Transportation
- The Ministry of Internal Affairs
- The Ministry of Public Works and Utilities
- The Ministry of Defence

6. Members of the Commission were expected to meet periodically to formulate manpower policies in terms of population, employment, education, and manpower training in accordance with the Commission's general objective. To facilitate the formulation of such policies, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs was designated as the Secretariat to the Commission charged with the responsibilities to:

- assess the present short-term, medium-term and long-term requirements for trained Liberians at various levels of skills;
- evaluate existing internal and external facilities for education and training; and
- investigate, from technical and financial standpoints, possibilities of organizing employment projects designed to reduce unemployment and underemployment.

7. Sadly, the Manpower Commission held its first meeting in 1970 - four years after its creation. This indicates that those manpower and employment policy measures stipulated in the 1967-1970 Development Plan, though very general, were not implemented by the Commission. Following that, only a few meetings were held concentrating on technical matters rather than policy issues. All in all, the Commission failed to produce the needed policy measures and guidance in respect of population, employment, education and training during its life span.

8. There were many factors responsible for the failure of the Commission to implement its functions as assigned by the Manpower Act of 1966. Among them was the lack of a functioning secretariat equipped with professional manpower planners, economists and statisticians. The Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs,

though designated as the Secretariat, did not have a human resource management unit within its organization to serve as the technical arm to the Commission. Consequently, the Ministry failed the Commission by its inability to assess manpower requirements, evaluate education facilities and organize employment projects to curtail unemployment and underemployment as expected. Other short comings included the lack of interest in manpower planning on the part of those concerned; the extreme duplicated compositional structure of the Manpower Commission, the National Planning Council and the Cabinet, and the lack of proper co-ordination and communication.

9. The above situation cost the Government a great loss in terms of finance and human efforts. Of prime significance, manpower surveys conducted during that period neglected their objectives and were unscientifically planned and executed. All this deprived the Commission of basic data and analytical alternative suggestions needed to formulate and implement human resources development and utilization strategies and policies.

10. A major attempt at revitalizing the human resources management system was made in 1973 in line with recommendations of a Human Resources Development Mission headed by the ILO involving the participation of five other international organizations. The highlight of this attempt, was the creation of a manpower planning unit within the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, under the first World Bank Education Project. The unit was to provide the needed technical arm to the Commission. The principal output of the unit was the Indicative 10-year Manpower Plan of Liberia. By late 1974, the unit was institutionalized and elevated to a divisional status. A vigorious staff development programme and data gathering activities were pursued which marked the beginning of manpower and employment planning as a systematic process in Liberia.

(2) Recent Human Resources Management Institutions

11. Though nothing much is left of or heard about the Manpower Commission, there are presently two principal national organs in Liberia charged with the responsibility of manpower and employment planning functions, viz. the Social Planning Division located in the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, and the Department of Planning and Human Resources Development in the Ministry of Labour. These two are complemented by a number of sectoral manpower and employment planning organs.

(i) Social Planning Division: Ministry of Planning & Economic Affairs

12. In 1981, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs effected a change in its administrative organization. As a consequence of this change, the Manpower Planning Division was abolished and replaced by the Social Planning Division. The new Division was made up of a Manpower and Employment Unit, an Education and Training Unit, and a Health, Social Services and Housing Unit.[1/]

[1/] Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, 1982 Annual Report, Monrovia, 1982.

It was envisaged that the Social Planning Division would strive to develop and achieve development planning objectives in the areas of Manpower and Employment Management, Education, Health, Social Services and Public Housing. Basically, in accordance with the Ministry's general terms of reference, this sectoral arrangement is intended to improve the capacity of the Division to identify sectoral development projects for funding and to assist agencies responsible for implementing associated social sector programmes in terms of project preparation, monitoring and evaluation.

13. Within this framework, the Manpower and Employment Unit, which is of primary concern to us in this paper, is charged with the responsibility of collecting all relevant information regarding employment, unemployment, under-employment, and manpower supply and demand conditions in the country. The Unit is to also analyze expatriate employment and coordinate with other government and non-government agencies matters relating to the formulation of manpower and employment policies.

14. Presently, the Unit is faced with two interrelated problems: First is its inability to obtain adequate administrative support, and secondly, the unit lacks an effective incentive system to attract, motivate and retain capable staff. Together, these two have affected adversely the performance level of the Unit.

(ii) Department of Planning and Human Resources Development: Ministry of Labour

15. The second principal national manpower and employment planning organ is the Department of Planning and Human Resources Development located in the Ministry of Labour. The Department, headed by a Deputy Minister, is sub-divided into three bureaus headed respectively by an Assistant Minister. These are:

- Bureau of Manpower Planning, Development & Utilization;
- Bureau of Labour Statistics and Research;
- Bureau of Employment Services

16. The Department is mandated, through the collective efforts of the above Bureaus, to[1/]

- formulate programmes which will give guidance to the nation's human resources development and promote their effective utilization;
- control and screen alien applications for gainful employment in Liberia;
- collect, compile, analyze and distribute relevant information on labour matters;
- provide information on job vacancies and assist Liberian job-seekers to gain employment; and
- assist and advise unskilled job-seekers to understand their potentials and thereby make free occupational choices.

17. The Department equally lacks adequate administrative support and the ability to recruit, retain and motivate competent staff in the discharge of its duties.

1/ Ministry of Labour, Annual Report 1983, Monrovia.

In addition, functions of the Bureaus are not well articulated towards ensuring a comprehensive and functioning human resources management system.[1/] Not only have these constraints diminished the growth and activities of the Department, they have also minimized its levels of efficiency and effectiveness.

(iii) Sectoral Organs

18. Complementing the activities of these two organs are a number of sectoral organs dealing with human resources management. These include (a) the Bureau of Planning in the Ministry of Education which deals with curriculum planning, education planning, school facilities planning and education data collection; (b) personnel departments or units within various ministries, agencies and enterprises looking after their respective staff recruitment, retraining, payment, promotion, career development, discipline, productivity and general welfare issues; and (c) human resources units in several large enterprises which, in addition to normal duties of personnel departments, prepares short and long-term manpower needs schedules for specific enterprises.

19. What emerges is a framework for an overall human resources management system. A major weakness of the framework is that the activities of these organic parts are far from being integrated with those carried out by the Ministries of Labour and Planning and Economic Affairs. In most cases, these complementing organs adopt inward-looking approaches in their activities with little or no reference made to the activities of the two national organs. The magnitude of this dis-integration of activities is intensified by the lack of a machinery to effect co-ordination and communication between various human resources management organs. Reversing the situation would require among other things, policy formulation and the strengthening of existing institutional inter-relationships.

III. Effectiveness of Manpower and Employment Planning Institutions in Liberia

20. Complementary sectoral organs for manpower and employment planning, particularly those within the non-public sector, are more viable in their level of effectiveness than the Social Planning Division and the Department of Planning and Human Resources Development. Despite the existence of the two latter organs, basic processed data needed for manpower and employment planning is almost non-existent. This makes effective manpower and employment planning almost impossible since the exercise would largely depend upon the availability of past and current statistics on manpower requirements and supplies. Worse still, whatever statistics that are available are more often of ad-hoc variety thus lacking continuity and prohibiting comparability with other data.

21. The root cause of ineffective manpower and employment planning is not solely with the non-availability of data as may have been implied above. This is only a symptom. To ensure effective planning, institutional arrangements themselves must be effective in (i) their inter-relationships with other organs within the aggregate development system, (ii) programme planning, and execution, and (iii) staff development and utilization. The situation in Liberia, as briefly discussed below shows signs of difficiencies in these three respects.

[1/] For a detailed discussion of a comprehensive human resource planning sub-system functions, refer to working document No. 11 of the workshop.

This has left the level of effectiveness of manpower and employment planning institutions in Liberia far from being desirable.

(i) Operational linkages

22. On the whole, there is a lack of operational linkages between and within the principal manpower and employment planning agencies and the sectoral organs responsible for manpower and employment planning. Unlike the past, when various responsible organs could meet periodically under the direction of the Manpower Commission to discuss and harmonize programmes and activities, very little is done presently to ensure this vital element for effectiveness. Data gathering forms are not exchanged nor fully discussed among concerned staff within and between units. Collaboration in survey design and conduct is usually at an undesirable level. More often than not these various organs work in isolation resulting in possible duplication of efforts and wastage of scarce resources.

23. This makes the need for developing and strengthening the necessary linkages a matter of priority. The two principal organs responsible for manpower and employment planning should take the lead by instituting programmes that would assist and facilitate individual sectoral units with their programme design and execution. Additionally, an assessment of on-going and planned manpower and employment planning activities of each organ needs to be undertaken and reconciled if necessary.

(ii) Programme planning and execution

24. Poor programming and other factors have led to the relative poor performance of the two principal organs responsible for manpower and employment planning during the last few years. The results of numerous activities have not been able to justify the inputs allocated to those activities. In other words, the level of effectiveness of these institutions, in terms of programmes costs-effectiveness, is far from being desirable. A brief analysis of a few examples could substantiate the above observation.

(a) The 1982 manpower survey

25. During the 1980-83 period, an attempt was made to improve the data base necessary for formulating and managing a meaningful manpower development and utilization policy. With the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a Second National Manpower Planning Project was undertaken. The project was planned to be implemented in three phases, viz. a manpower survey based on an establishment approach, a labour force survey based on the household approach and an informal sector study.

26. The manpower survey, conducted in 1982 with ILO technical assistance staff, was aimed at providing information that would facilitate an understanding of the current manpower situation in the country. Unfortunately, this is the only phase of the project which was implemented. Worst still, the ILO consultant had to leave upon completion of his contract without finalizing the survey report. The survey scanty data were however, tabulated by the U.S. Bureau of Census in collaboration with another ILO consultant who had been contracted for a period of three (3) months to:

- study and analyze the survey results for purposes of manpower and employment planning;
- assess present and future manpower requirements on the basis of such analysis; and
- conduct on the job training for Liberian staff associated with the analysis.

27. According to the team, the data collected were faulty and incomplete and as such it is not possible to conduct any analysis as required by the team's term of reference. Inadequate design of the survey instruments and tabulation plan were said to have attributed to the poor results. Besides, the survey data have the aspect of a descriptive employment survey failing to interweave the system of occupational classification with the skill categories relevant to manpower surveying. The data-processors of the U.S. Bureau of the census particularly observed that a "substantial portion of the data collected is of poor quality and cannot provide useful results".[1] Commenting on the questionnaire, the Bureau of Census adds that "... had a pretest been done, several questions that are conceptually vague or ambiguously worded would have been deleted".[2] It further observes that "... in addition to the vagueness and ambiguity, the structure of the questionnaire leaves much to be desired ... providing minimal pre-coding of some categories and lacking in coding to facilitate data entry".[3] What is more, these shortcomings are compounded by an inadequate sample frame leading to under-coverage and an undue pro-Monrovia bias in reporting.

28. Evidently, from the point of view of employment surveying, the exercise falls short of technical requirement. From current indications, a reported employment level of some 112,000 has apparently fallen short of a probable 160,000. Besides, the procedural omission makes it impossible to quantify the pool of high and middle-level skills. Whatever analysis that can be done with the existing 1982 Manpower Survey data does not significantly contribute to the understanding of present and future manpower requirements, which was its original objective.

29. A review of the employment and manpower chapter of the Second Four Year Socio-Economic Development Plan shows how crucial are suitable data to the integration of manpower and employment planning into economic planning. This is a matter of grave concern considering the fact that presently available data do not in any way enhance the prospects for this outcome and in present conditions of growing global and structural imbalances in the labour market. In consonance of the above, Government is considering a repeat of the manpower survey, so as to obtain data which would be used together with the results of the 1984 census to prepare a report on the manpower situation needed to design manpower and employment programme, for the Third Socio-Economic Development Plan which should commence in July, 1985.[4]

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[1] U.S. Bureau of Census, Summary Report on Data Quality and Major Findings, Washington D.C., 1984.

[2] Ibid

[3] Ibid

[4] To what extent progress has been made is not known at time of writing.

(b) Activities of the Ministry of Labour

30. What is fundamentally lacking for effective programming is an appropriate organ that would undertake the overall task of manpower and employment planning as well as provide, facilitate and strengthen inter-agency communication and co-ordination. Such organ would, above all, promote closer working relations between sectoral units and be charged with the responsibilities to:

- lay down appropriate standards and concepts for carrying out all manpower surveys and collection of manpower data;
- collect, analyze and present manpower supply data including current outputs as well as future outputs of skills from all formal and informal educational and skill development institutions;
- carry out all analytical work as distinct from mere data collection including short term and long term projections of manpower requirements of various skills and match them in relation to expected outputs.

31. Earlier, the broad functions of the Ministry of Labour relative to manpower and employment planning were spelt out. The appropriateness of the role of Ministry of Labour in manpower and employment planning cannot be overemphasized. The Government expects the Ministry to assume greater responsibility in manpower and employment planning eventhough the current line of demarcation between the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Labour in this respect is not very clear. It could have been most appropriate for the major responsibility of organizing and administering employment services and designing and implementing employment creation and productivity enhancement strategies to rest with the Ministry of Labour.

32. Though the Department of Planning and Human Resources Development is accorded a higher status than the Manpower and Employment Unit of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs in terms of administrative organization and staffing arrangements, it is not as effective as it should be. A possible factor could be the rapid turnover of staff. This makes it difficult to develop a consistent and comprehensive programme to justify the need for basic logistical support required for the full discharge of the Ministry's functions. In addition, the Ministry's activities have been constrained by increased reduction in budgetary support in response to national budgetary reductions across the board.

33. Recently, very little has been accomplished in the area of manpower and employment planning by the Department of Planning and Human Resources Development. Outputs have been less than desirable in the areas where the Department has concentrated its efforts and resources. For example, the Division of Alien Registration and Liberianization recorded 3,432 expatriates as registered in 1983. Using the Division's alien registration files, the Manpower and Employment Unit in the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs reported 6,100 expatriate workers for the same period. The discrepancy in both figures reflects the level of effectiveness in the Department's performance.

34. The situation regarding employment and other labour statistics is equally severe for the present arrangements are far from adequate. The Division of Labour Statistics and Research conducts monthly survey of employment, but due to several problems, the survey coverage and reliability need considerable improvement. The number of establishments that respond to this survey is less than 25% of the total number of establishment assumed to exist in the country.

Furthermore, the response rate fluctuates greatly from one period to the next. This is partly because individual employers are to pickup the questionnaires, complete and return them with no follow-up on defaulters primarily because of the absence of logistics and up-to-date national list for identifying non-respondents. This situation needs urgent improvement if the Division to be effective within the system.

(iii) Staffing capabilities

35. Another disturbing factor which intensifies manpower and employment planning institutional ineffectiveness relates to staffing matters. In the case of Liberia there are three elements that affect institutional performance. First, there is a shortage of trained and qualified middle-level manpower and employment planners and statisticians. Secondly, staff and unit functions are not adequatley defined and delegated. Finally, the staffing organizational pattern is vertical rather than horizontal thus lacking in scope. These are reflected in Tables 1 and 2 below.

36. Analysis of the tables suggests the urgent need for measures to strengthen the staffing capabilities of the Manpower and Employment Planning Unit within the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs and the Department of Planning and Human Resources Development. Such measures could include attracting new and qualified personnel, reviewing and harmonizing staff functions in relation to expected institutional outputs, and developing and implementing a staff up-grading plan and programme preferably along the lines indicated in the last columns of Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Staffing Profile of the Manpower and Employment Planning Unit in MPEA by qualification, specialization, designated terms of reference and training needs as at November 1984

Title/qualification/ specialization	Actual Work Performed	Training Needs
Director, Social Planning Division **M.A., Economics**	Under the guidance of the Assistant Minister for Sectoral Planning, Director formulates work plan for the Division and supervises its implementation. Undertakes the planning and implementation of all studies conducted by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs for manpower and employment planning as well as carry out other miscellaneous duties assigned by the Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs and his Deputy for Planning.	One-month study tour of manpower planning organizations in developed and developing countries. The study tour should be designed to expose him to new approaches to manpower and employment planning and to review successful programmes in manpower and employment planning.
Chief, Manpower & Employment Unit **M.A., Public Administration**	Serves as Principal Assistant to the Director of the Social Planning Division. Specifically, undertakes manpower, employment and other statistical studies aimed at formulating national socio-economic development programmes; and carries out other duties that are assigned from time to time.	A nine-month fellowship designed to upgrade the knowledge and skills in national manpower employment planning sub-divided into six-month theoretical training and three-month attachment to a large organization engaged in national manpower and employment planning in a developing country with successful experience in manpower planning.
Planning Officer, Grade 1 **Diploma in Demography and Statistics**	Responsible to conduct actual manpower and employment survey, interviews, collect public and quasi-public sector employment statistics including expatriate employment; and compile, code and tabulate manpower and employment information.	Three-month fellowship designed to expose the Planning Officer to the techniques and new approaches in manpower survey methodology and data processing.

Title/qualification/ specialization	Actual Work Performed	Training Needs
Junior Planning Officer Grade 1 Second Year College Economics	Assist the Director, the Cheif of Manpower Employment Unit and the Planning Officer to carry out their duties.	Two-year baccalaureate programme in Economics and Statistics with special programme in manpower and employment planning.
Planning Officer Grade 2 High School graduate	Same as the duties of Jr. Planning Officer No. 1.	A four-year baccalaureate programme in Economics with special emphasis on Manpower Planning Methodology.

Note: Besides minor adjustments, the Table is obtained from the study on "The Status and Effectiveness of Existing National Manpower and Employment Policies, Administrative Machineries and Staffing Arrangements in Liberia.

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Table 2: Staffing Profile of the Department of Planning and Human Resources Development in the Ministry of Labour by qualification, specialization, designated terms of reference and training needs as at November 1984

Title/qualification/ specialization	Actual Work Performed	Training Needs
Deputy Minister Planning and Human Resources Development M.A., Management/Economics	Responsible to: - formulate programmes which give guidance to Liberia's human resources development and promote their utilization; - control and screen alien applications for employment in Liberia; - collect, compile, analyze and distribute relevant information on labour matters; - provide information on job vacancies and assist Liberian job-seekers gain employment; - assist and advise unskilled job-seekers to understand their potentials and thereby make free occupational choices.	One-month study tour of similar departments of labour in developing countries that are charged with similar responsibiliti

Title/qualification/ specialization	Actual Work Performed	Training Needs
Assistant Minister, Manpower Planning Development and Utilization M.A., International Relations	Duties yet to be defined	Three-month fellowship in manpower development and utilization planning.
Director, Manpower Planning B.Sc., Economics	Undefined as yet	Six-month fellowship training in manpower planning.
Assistant Minister, Employment Services Diplomas in Industrial Relations, Employment and Labour Market Information	Assists workers to find suitable employment and employers to find workers and assists them in their job placement; obtains information of job vacancies and requirements from employers for prospective employees/public; collects comprehensive labour market information.	Four-month training in the organization and management of employment exchange, employment services and labour market information in suitable developing country.
Director, Employment Services B.Sc., Economics	Serves as Principal Assistant to the Assistant Minister for Employment Services in Carrying out the functions outlined above.	Nine-month training in the organization and management of employment exchange, employment services and labour market information.
Assistant Director, Qualification and Specialization not given	Assists the Director in the discharge of his duties	Six-month training in the organization and management of employment exchange, employment services and labour market information.
Employers Relation Representative Qualification and specialization not given	Undefined as yet	One-month on-the-job training in industrial relations
Placement Officers (3) High school graduates	Assist in the placement of job-seekers	Two-month fellowship each in employment service and employment market information
Employment Officers (8) Qualification and Specialization not given	Undefined as yet	Undefined due to lack of clearly defined functions

Title/qualification/ Specialization	Actual Work Performed	Training Needs
Assistant Minister, Labour Statistics and Research Diplomas in Industrial and Labour Statistics B.A.	Administers labour statistics and research programmes, designed activities to collect, compile, analyze and disseminate labour market information	One-month fellowship training aimed at re-organization and strengthening the labour ministry's capacities and capability to produce comprehensive and meaningful labour statistics on a regular and continuous basis.
Director, Labour Statistics Diploma in Labour Statistics	In addition to assisting the Assistant Minister for Labour Statistics and Research in the discharge of his duties, he is fully responsible for the preparation of the required questionnaire for conducting field investigation and collecting employment and other labour market information.	Two-month refresher course in labour statistics and research methods.
Assistant Director Qualification and specialization not given	Serves as Principal Assistant to the Director of Labour Statistics	Four-year degree programme in Labour Statistics
Chief Statistician Diploma in Statistics	Collects labour statistics and tabulate same	Two-month diploma course in research methodology
Research Officer B.A., Economics	Serves as Principal Research Assistant to the Director in conducting labour studies	Two-month diploma course in research methodology
Statistical Officers Diplomas in Labour Statistics	Undefined as yet	Training on-the-job
Director, Vocational Guidance and Counselling M.A.; Vocational Guidance and Counselling with emphasis in vocational/ technical education plus additional specialized training in vocational guidance and counselling	Undefined as yet	Three-month refresher course or study tour in problem solving and group dynamics

Title/qualification/ specialization	Actual Work Performed	Training Needs
Assistant Director B.A., Sociology	Undefined as yet	Six-month course in vocational guidance and career counselling

Note: Same as for Table 1.

IV. National Manpower and Employment Policies

37. Although the Government of Liberia is making conscientious efforts to adopt a manpower and employment policy aimed at efficient development and utilization of her human resources in order to accelerate social and economic development she has yet to enunciate a clear manpower and employment policy. Outstanding among various efforts is the adoption of the Liberianization policy which arose out of the traditional dependence upon expensive expatriates to facilitate national economic growth. The objective of this policy, which was instituted more than ten years ago, is to achieve self-sufficiency in manpower resources as rapidly and as efficiently as feasible. Through this policy, which was instituted more than ten years ago, is to achieve self-sufficiency in manpower resources as rapidly and as efficiently as feasible. Through this policy it is hoped that a large and equitable share of high and middle-level occupations, which are currently occupied by expatriates, will be filled by qualified Liberians in the years ahead.[1/]

38. Due to the free enterprise nature of the Liberian economy, manpower and employment planning is carried out by central government while private enterprises are allowed to hire and fire in accordance with Liberian labour laws. Nevertheless, all employers are encouraged to ensure that the Liberianization policy succeeds.

39. In the past, Government has requested major employers to establish manpower development sections within their organization and to develop a schedule of Liberianization of their workforce. The development of such systematic implementation of the Liberianization schedule has diminished in recent years. Notwithstanding many private enterprises have contributed to manpower development in Liberia through the provision of training facilities tailor-made to meet the speical manpower needs of individual firms. By the

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[1/] 10-year Indicative Manpower Plan of Liberia, 1974-1984; Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, Monrovia, 1974.

manpower and employment policy so as to ensure maximum contribution of all firms towards solving the acute manpower and employment problems currently being confronted by the Government and the people of Liberia.

40. What has been clearly understood by the Government about this policy, is that Liberianization requires the availability of adequate Liberians who possess skills that will enable them to efficiently produce and distribute the goods and services needed for national socio-economic development. Investment in education and training and the development of manpower for strategic occupations to provide a broad range of essential professional and technical services must consequently take place on a systematic basis within the framework of a comprehensive human resource management system. Thus, to Liberianize, it is not enough to take a Liberian national and place him in an expatriate post within an establishment. The Liberian must have the requisite skills.

41. In consonance of this, systematic efforts are being made in education and training and developing Liberians as well as creating a conducive environment to promote effective and efficient utilization of the Liberian human resource base. Specifically, the Government has devised a manpower development strategy which is aimed at:

- qualitative improvements in education and training;
- the development of vocational training and technical education to meet key manpower requirements;
- the strengthening of educational and skill training, planning and administration; and
- the expansion of primary education.

42. According to the World Bank, Government is making substantial progress in improving access to education and in establishing education and training programmes to meet priority manpower requirements.[1/] From 1968 to 1980 for example, enrollments in pre-primary and primary schools increased from 120,000 to 228,000 and lower and upper-secondary school enrollments increased from 13,000 to 52,000. These are equal to average annual growth rates of 6% and 12% at the primary and the secondary levels respectively. In addition, the Government has tripled the annual output of trained primary school teachers, established agricultural training programmes for lower and middle-level personnel, and set up vocational and technical training programmes for all levels. Despite these efforts, Liberia continues to experience a shortage of strategic manpower which is indicative of the fact that the Liberianization policy has not been as effecitve as desired.

43. On the employment side, other than minimum wage legislation, labour-management negotiation rules and procedures and public servant employment regulations, very little has been done by way of policy formulation. Clearly, ennunciated policies on job creation, income distribution, productivity, and manpower mobilization are virtually non-existent. Needless to say that the

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1/ The World Bank, Staff Appraisal Report: Republic of Liberia Fourth Education Project, Washington D.C., 1982.

impact of these on economic growth and development is tremendous if properly planned and addressed. Accordingly, all efforts should be made towards the development of a comprehensive employment policy and those institutional requirements for making sure that the formulated policies are implemented.

(V) Conclusion and Programme of Action

44. The paper has attempted to set the stage for discussions and analysis of issues and methodologies for human resources policy formulation and management in Liberia. The underlying message is very clear. Policies, plans and strategies for human resources development and utilization in Liberia must be seen as part of the total, integrated package of national action for overall economic and social development. Full participation of relevant Ministries, enterprises and training institutions from the very start of the planning process will go a long way towards raising the level of co-ordination and ensuring that the programmes are coherently designed, manpower priorities identified, and the mechanisms for implementing the plan agreed upon.

45. The required human resources management system should extend beyond the macro-level to include the subsectoral and service sectors, with built-in mechanisms to monitor divergences between planned output and actual demand, as well as changes in technology, manpower skill mix and natural resource development. Manpower and employment planning should form an essential element within the system.

46. In order to ensure maximum effectiveness a co-ordinating body for human resources management must be established with clearly defined functions and well staffed with officers in the specified areas of planning, programming, implementation and monitoring of human resources development and utilization for national development.